

E

467

.1

.H4A8

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

E 467
Class. . . / Copyright No.

Shelf H4A8

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

✓
PENNSYLVANIA CLUB LECTURES.

COURSE OF 1889-90.

AN ADDRESS

ON

THE LIFE AND SERVICES OF
JOHN F. HARTRANFT.

BY

40
HON. WILLIAM N. ASHMAN.



PUBLISHED BY THE COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION.

PHILADELPHIA:
THE PENNSYLVANIA CLUB,
1423 WALNUT STREET.
1890.

E 467
.1
H 4 A 8

Copyrighted, 1890,
By WILLIAM N. ASHMAN.

PRESS OF WM F. FELL & CO.,
1220-24 SANSON STREET,
PHILADELPHIA.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND SERVICES OF JOHN F. HARTRANFT.*

The successful panegyrist is frequently, of necessity, an artist. In men's characters as in their faces, some blemish or deformity often mars the symmetry of what would be otherwise a noble outline, and the skill of the biographer and the deftness of the painter are shown as well by concealing the ugliness of the one as by enhancing the beauty of the other. The greatest men have been in some part of their being the smallest men. Fortunately for me, the task to which I come with a grateful heart to-day needs for its performance no resources of art. I am to speak of a man—so unaffected, so honest, so real in his manhood, that the simplest words will best portray his character, and the bare recital of his deeds will be his best eulogy. Power did not spoil him; wealth did not seduce him; flattery did not weaken him; he tasted whatever of sweet and whatever of bitter there was in them all, but he kept to his first estate and to the faith of his childhood; held fast to his earliest friendships; and to you, who stood in his presence, and forgot with him, the trappings

* An address delivered before The Pennsylvania Club, under the auspices of the Committee on Political Education, Philadelphia, January 30th, 1890.

with which others would have decked him, he showed himself grandly a Man. If modesty allied to courage, and tenderness of feeling to firmness of will; if prudence in judgment followed by swiftness in action, and a zeal for present interests tempered by a wise forecasting of the future, are the sure marks of greatness, then he was also great; for all of these qualities centred in John F. Hartranft.

You know the story of his life, and yet it has seemed to me that it would be interesting to recall some of its incidents, and to go with him in memory, as he climbed the steps of preferment. He could boast worthy lineage. As far back as 1669, the name of Melchior Hartranft appeared on the rolls of a sect of pietists in Germany, whose simple but mystical faith provoked a persecution from which his children escaped by migrating to America. They settled in Montgomery County in this State, in 1734, and successive generations bearing their name have maintained to this day a home in that section. Here on December 16th, 1830, General Hartranft was born. His education was sedulously cared for, and in its preliminary stages he had the benefit of the tuition of Samuel Aaron, who was widely known as a teacher and speaker of intense convictions and extraordinary ability. He completed his course at Union College, Schenectady, New York. His taste for the study of Mathematics led him to adopt the profession of engineering, and for two years he assisted in running the lines of several railroads. Circumstances, however, induced him to return to Norristown and prosecute the study of the law.

On October 4th, 1860, he was admitted to the bar, and was soon afterwards elected to the Borough Council and the School Board. He had always shown a capacity for military affairs, and when the rebellion broke out he was Colonel of the First Regiment of the Montgomery County Militia, an organization which numbered six companies. The policy of the national administration was not then in accord with his party principles; but without being disturbed by this consideration he promptly tendered the services of his regiment to the Governor, who as promptly accepted them. In three days' time the command, fully recruited, reported at Harrisburg for duty, and it was mustered in on April 20th, 1861, for the term of three months, by the title of the Fourth Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers. Soon afterwards it was stationed in front of Alexandria, as part of the force protecting Washington. The disastrous advance on Bull Run was ordered on the very day the regimental term of enlistment expired; and in that engagement Colonel Hartranft served as a volunteer aid on the staff of General Franklin. He displayed such conspicuous ability that the division commander used these words of commendation in his report: "His services were exceedingly valuable to me, and he distinguished himself in his attempt to rally the regiments (5th and 11th Massachusetts) which had been thrown into confusion." General McDowell, in a letter subsequently written to General Hartranft, said: "I always regretted that I did not make an exception in your case, in my report of the battle of Bull Run, and name you for your good conduct, instead of leav-

ing it with General Franklin. I regret this the more as General Franklin's report was not printed." Without delay he was commissioned Colonel of the 51st Pennsylvania Volunteers, a three years' organization, whose fame thereafter became his own; and when that regiment received its stand of colors, in November, 1861, Governor Curtin uttered the prophetic words: "I am looking hundreds in the face, now in perfect health, who will never return to their homes; but their memories will be enshrined in the hearts of the generations of future ages." Three months afterwards the men went into their first action. Their regiment had been assigned to Reno's brigade, and formed part of the force under General Burnside in his expedition to Newbern. The passage was made by sea in a stormy season, and as soon as a landing was made on Roanoke Island, hostilities began. A single causeway through a swamp led to the enemy's earthworks, but it was soon traversed and the entire rebel force with its artillery was captured. From this point to Newbern the march was a trying one. Soldiers lost their shoes in the tenacious mud and actually fought the battle barefooted. But it was a proud day for Colonel Hartranft's regiment. After the fight had continued for some hours, that regiment, which had been held in reserve, was brought up to the front and immediately ordered to charge. At the word, it dashed across the ravine, and carried the works on the other side, and at four o'clock the city of Newbern was in the hands of our troops. The engagement at Camden, North Carolina, which followed in April, was the only action participated in by the regiment, while Colonel

Hartranft commanded it, at which he was not present. The sickness of two of his children had called him North, and he reached his home only after both of them had died.

When autumn set in, the Fifty-first Pennsylvania entered upon a campaign which soon turned its men into veterans. In the month of September the battle of Antietam was fought, but before that action the regiment had gone through the experiences of Fredericksburg, the Second Bull Run, Chantilly and South Mountain. It was a hard school, whose lessons were uncheered by a single victory, and the death roll of the Division included the name of General Reno. In two of these engagements and in the retreat towards the Rappahannock, it fell to the lot of Colonel Hartranft to cover with his regiment, the rear of our columns.

The battle of Antietam will always be remembered as the first historic battle of the rebellion. It is fraught with a large personal interest because it marked the culminating point in the career of a commander upon whom the eyes of the nation were turned. I am not competent to praise or to condemn; but the fact is patent that if the victory of that day had been more decisive than it was, a future whose possibilities can scarcely be conjectured, might have opened before him. Fortune is too often the presiding genius of war; and even Napoleon, when he trusted in the star of his destiny, confessed his belief in the truth of the aphorism. General Hooker began the engagement in the afternoon of September 16th, and he was followed across the creek during the night by the forces of Generals Sumner and

Mansfield. At nine o'clock on the morning of the 17th, the battle had raged for more than four hours with no apparent result, and the bulk of our troops was still on the hither side of the stream. Spanning the ravine and abutting on that part of the field where the foe was massed, whom General McClellan desired to reach, was a stone bridge from whose terminus on the right bank, a steep declivity ran down to the water's edge. The approach to the structure on that side is thus described in the official report of the battle: "In this slope the roadway is scarped, running both ways from the bridge and passing up to the higher land by ascending through ravines, above and below, the upper ravine being some six hundred yards above the bridge, and the lower about half that distance below. On the hillside immediately above the bridge was a stone fence running parallel to the stream; the turns of the roadway were covered by rifle pits and breastworks made of rails and stone, all of which defences, as well as the woods which covered the slope, were filled with the enemy's infantry and sharpshooters. Besides the infantry defences, batteries were placed to enfilade the bridge and all its approaches."* Two attempts had been made to cross, and two regiments of General Sturgis's division had actually reached the bridge, but the loss in passing up the valley and at the bridge itself was so great that the men were compelled to turn back. At this moment General Burnside ordered up the Fifty-first Pennsylvania.

* General Cox's Official Record; Moore's Rebellion Record, Vol. 5, pp. 454-5.

The command was given in terms and by a mode which were meant to be significant. It was addressed not to the General of the Brigade, but to Colonel Hartranft himself, and it ran thus: "General Burnside orders the Fifty-first Pennsylvania Volunteers, Colonel Hartranft, to storm the bridge." Colonel Hartranft formed his plan on the instant. He saw that it would be death to move along the edge of the narrow stream, every foot of which was open to the fire of a hiding enemy, and so he led his men through the woods and behind the hills, until they faced the bridge. Here he ranged them in order, and then dashed down the slope and out into the open. In this short rush many brave men fell, and many more were killed as they were scaling a fence which skirted the roadway leading to the bridge. But the bridge was won, and a firm position was gained and held on the opposite side, and then the whole Ninth Corps passed over in safety, and helped to complete the victory for the North. One hundred and twenty-five men, in killed and wounded, were lost to the regiment that day. The gallant Bell, its Lieutenant Colonel, had been among the first to cross. He came up to Colonel Hartranft and suggested that more troops should be brought to the position then occupied. The Colonel gave him leave to bring them, and he started back towards the bridge for that purpose. In a minute afterwards a ball struck him on the temple and he never spoke again. Conspicuous as was his service at Antietam, and often as it has since been praised, the rank of Brigadier General to which it entitled him, and for

which he was recommended by General Burnside, was not conferred upon General Hartranft until May 12th, 1864. Antietam was followed by a change of commanders and of the scene of action, and the year closed with the unsuccessful expedition beyond Fredericksburg. In the three or four days' skirmishing which took place on the heights, Colonel Hartranft commanded four regiments, and the brigade to which his own regiment was attached was among the last to leave the field.

In 1863 the theatre of Colonel Hartranft's operations widened. His command was transferred to Kentucky, and during the spring and early summer it rendered continuous service in checking guerilla raids at Winchester, Lancaster, Crab Orchard and Stanford. As part of the Ninth Army Corps, it left Kentucky in June, and was assigned to the army which, under General Grant, captured Vicksburg on the 4th of July. Then it advanced with Sherman against Jackson, in the State of Mississippi, and on the 18th of July it halted in the captured city. Long marches soon succeeded, and these following so closely upon the active labors in the field, and in a sultry climate, prostrated many of the men. In this campaign Colonel Hartranft had been in charge of a whole division, and his protracted and varied duties had, under such adverse conditions, proved too much even for his vigorous frame. But before he had fully recovered from the fever which attacked him, stirring events were imminent, and he resumed command of the Second Division as soon as it arrived at Lenoir. At some distance from that town,

and directly in the line of General Burnside's march, was Campbell's Station. It was the centre of several important highways, and its advantages of position were such that a rebel force, judiciously handled, could readily have intercepted and captured the Union army. Word was brought that Longstreet had crossed the Tennessee and was in full march for this point. General Burnside quickened his movements, but his men were advancing on a longer line than that which was open to the enemy, and the signs of a very serious disaster were ominous. In this emergency Colonel Hartranft's division was ordered forward with all possible speed, and to the Fifty-first Pennsylvania Regiment was ordered the task of moving Benjamin's Battery of Heavy Artillery. The roads were soft with mud, and the Pennsylvanians actually harnessed themselves to the guns, and in that way toiled through the night. The early morning found them at Campbell's, with the rebel troops just coming in sight. The battery did good work that day, and Colonel Hartranft had the proud satisfaction of holding the foe so completely in check until evening that Burnside's army with all its train was enabled to pass the point with ease, and under cover of the night to reach Knoxville. The value of this achievement, which, following so quickly upon the fall of Vicksburg, has been dwarfed in the history of the war, may be estimated not simply from the fact that it was wrought in the face of overwhelming odds, but that it saved a large army from practical annihilation.

It was a gala day for the regiment after 1863 had

closed, and it stood again in the streets of Norristown, whither a short respite after its reënlistment had permitted it to return and to receive the warm welcome of a grateful community. It was a proud day for its commander. His fame as a soldier was widening; he was on the eve of larger events; he was beginning to receive his reward.

In the history which remains to be told, the crowning incident, and that upon which the claim of General Hartranft to military leadership may safely be rested, was the battle of Fort Stedman. But before that event occurred, he was the central figure in more than one act of the drama which was now moving to its end. The battle of Spottsylvania brought him his commission as Brigadier General. Yet in his own modest language "Service and honors do not always correspond." He was conscious that he had borne the brunt of a heavier burden on earlier fields; and he could wish, as we do, that this seal of approbation had been affixed to the work which he did at Campbell Station and Antietam. But it was meant to cover them, and no man doubted that it had been well earned.

In the swiftly succeeding pictures which the war at this stage threw on the canvas, none was more picturesque, if that word will describe a tragedy, than the explosion of the mine near Petersburg. That work had been projected with infinite skill, and for a deadly purpose; and when the catastrophe came, it laid an immense fortification in ruins, and destroyed its armament and its garrison. For seventeen days and nights General Hartranft lay with his

brigade at the very mouth of this hell, protecting the engineers, and swept by a steady fire of musketry. The necessity for unceasing vigilance was so urgent that at least one-third of his whole force was constantly on duty ; and the loss of the brigade amounted to 795 out of 1800 men. Among its officers, the gallant Schall, the new Colonel of the Fifty-first Pennsylvania, had fallen the preceding month in a charge which he led at Cold Harbor. At the very moment of the explosion an order came to General Hartranft to charge. Massed and protected as the rebels then were, it was simply the signal for his own destruction ; but he mounted the crater of the mine, and was proceeding to lead his men through the débris, when the order was countermanded. Then came the disaster at the Weldon Railroad, where a large part of Crawford's Division was captured, and the corps of General Warren was placed in imminent peril. General Hartranft was without instructions, but he heard the firing and at once took his brigade to the scene. In the conflict which ensued, his horse was shot under him, and a staff officer was slain at his side. But he turned defeat into victory, and secured a permanent lodgment on an important line of communication. If we compute the arduousness of the work which his troops did that year by the havoc which they suffered, we must rate it high. When the brigade crossed the Rapidan in May, it numbered five thousand men, of whom three thousand were fit for duty. In December, although three regiments had been added to it in the interim, it numbered less than one thousand available men.

About December 1st, 1864, General Hartranft was given the command of the Two Hundredth, Two Hundred and Fifth, Two Hundred and Seventh, Two Hundred and Eighth, Two Hundred and Ninth and Two Hundred and Eleventh Regiments of Pennsylvania Volunteers, all of them being new and untried organizations. They were formed, at his instance, into a division numbering 5000 men, and known as the Third Division of the Ninth Army Corps. Their discipline occupied his attention until the opening of the spring campaign. How important that labor was, and how splendidly it was compensated, were demonstrated in the quickly succeeding battle of Fort Stedman, which was fought on March 25th, 1865.*

Fort Stedman was built on an eminence known as Hare's Hill, about two miles from the centre of the town of Petersburg. It formed originally part of the rebel defences, and was captured in the general assault on the evening of June 16th, 1864, by the Second Corps. Colonel Stedman, whose brigade at that time held the line at this point, was mortally wounded, and in recognition of his services the fort was christened with his name. To the left of the fort were two small batteries, called Battery 11, and Battery 12; on the left, Batteries 10 and 9, and three-eighths of a mile distant and on high

* In the narrative of this engagement I have drawn largely upon an admirable work, entitled "Battle of Fort Stedman," by Major William H. Hodgkins, of the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers, a most gallant officer and gentleman, who served on the day it was fought, upon General Hartranft's staff.

ground, was Fort Haskell, which last mounted six guns and some mortars. Fort Stedman covered about three-fourths of an acre, and it was protected in front by abattis and other obstructions. Meade Station was the nearest point on the military railroad, and was situated one mile in the rear of the fort. From Battery 10 to the point of the enemy's works immediately opposite, the distance was only 435 feet; and one of the Union pickets was stationed just 205 feet from his Confederate neighbor. Behind the fort and within our lines were two hills, the Dunn House and the Friend House hills, and both were fortified.

In the winter of 1864 the Ninth Army Corps occupied a line, including these fortifications, and extending for seven miles, fronting the city of Petersburg. General Hartranft's Division was in reserve, and his own headquarters were at the Avery House, about a mile south of Fort Haskell. As the Spring of 1865 opened, General Grant, who feared that Lee might effect a junction with Johnston, planned a general movement to destroy the Danville and South Side Railroads, and thereby force Lee to abandon his works. Lee, according to the statement of Jefferson Davis,* observed the movement of the troops which were designed to turn his right, and conceived the project of a sortie, having for its purpose the capture of Fort Stedman and the neighboring works, and the threatening of Grant's line of communication with his base at City Point. For this service

* Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, Vol. II, p. 648.

the Stonewall Jackson Corps was selected, and Gen. John B. Gordon was named as the Commander. Preparations for the movement were made during the night of March 24th, 1865, and at 3 o'clock in the morning of the 25th the column started. A ruse was played which came near bringing fatal results to the Union troops. For weeks prior to the date in question, large numbers of deserters had come within our lines, encouraged, no doubt, by the offer, which had been promulgated from our headquarters, of payment for arms which they might bring with them. Deserters on this date flocked across in such numbers that the officer of the guard began to suspect treachery, and sent word to Fort Stedman and Battery 11 that things were suspicious. He was not a moment too alert: the pickets were overpowered by skirmishers who were disguised as deserters, and were closely followed up by the storming columns, which numbered more than 8000 men. Battery 10, which had received no warning, was almost immediately captured, and most of the garrison were either slain or taken prisoners. From Battery 10 there was a wide opening on the right and rear of Fort Stedman, and the enemy entered the sally-port, and after a desperate struggle with the now awakened garrison, and particularly with one battalion of Fourteenth N. Y. Heavy Artillery, secured possession and turned the guns upon our troops. The enemy then pushed on to Battery 11, which was held by the Twenty-ninth Massachusetts. This regiment had been aroused, but there was so little firing, that the sentinel on the parapet called out that there was no

attack, and the pickets could be seen standing undisturbed and quiet, alongside of their fires in the ravine below. On a sudden Gordon's men appeared in the rear of the battery; a desperate hand-to-hand fight succeeded, which was kept up for fifteen minutes, but the defenders were overpowered, and the battery fell into the hands of the foe. General McLaughlin, of the Third Division, whose headquarters were near Fort Haskell, on hearing the tumult, went at once to that fort, and finding that the men were on the watch, was on his way to Battery 11, when he was stopped by an officer, who told him that the fort had been taken. He immediately ordered up two regiments of Massachusetts men, the Fifty-ninth and Twenty-ninth, to charge with fixed bayonets, and they recaptured the battery at once. He then crossed the parapet into Fort Stedman, when he was, of course, surrounded by the enemy, and sent a prisoner to General Gordon, and by him taken to Petersburg. At this very serious juncture General Hartranft made his presence felt. He had been aroused from sleep by some movement of the Signal Corps on the roof of his headquarters at the Avery House. Before he could dress, word was brought that the rebels had broken through our lines, and a courier, who was despatched in haste to General McLaughlin, returned with the report that Fort Stedman had been captured. Two regiments were encamped at a short distance; the Two Hundredth Pennsylvania near the Dunn House Battery, and the Two Hundred and Ninth Pennsylvania at Meade Station, both points being within a compass of two

miles. These regiments, by a previous arrangement made in view of the probable difficulty of prompt communication between the commanders, owing to the length of the Union lines were, in case of an attack, to be at the disposal of General Willcox. They were accordingly ordered out by that General. When General Hartranft reached the headquarters of General Willcox he found the two regiments in motion, and he assumed their command. He wrote afterwards: "While talking with General Willcox, our attention was called to the puffs of smoke issuing from the wood in the rear, and to the right and left of Fort Stedman. It was not yet light enough to see the enemy, nor could any sound be heard, owing to the direction of the wind, but the white puffs indicated musketry firing."

General Hartranft, without waiting for the rest of the troops to come up, ordered the Two Hundred and Ninth Pennsylvania down the road, to the left of the Friend House, while he himself took the Two Hundredth Pennsylvania towards a point in the rear of Fort Stedman, which covered the main road leading to Meade Station and the Ninth Corps Hospitals, and upon which the enemy were moving in force. The Two Hundredth Pennsylvania advanced in line of battle, driving in the enemy's skirmishers; but the enemy were intrenched in some old works, and the guns of Fort Stedman were turned against us, and the men were forced to retire to shelter in another line of old defences, about forty yards in the rear and to the right of the fort. In this advance the standard bearer was killed, and General Hart-

ranft himself brought off the colors. "From horse-back at this point," said General Hartranft, "the enemy's officers could be plainly seen urging their men through Fort Stedman, and endeavoring to deploy them in rear." General Hartranft attacked the second time, and notwithstanding the fact that it was a new regiment, and for the first time under a galling fire, the Two Hundredth Pennsylvania held its ground for more than twenty minutes against overwhelming odds, and with a loss of more than one hundred men. This delay, thus won, really secured for us the victory. On falling back to the line of defences which it had left, the regiment was joined by the Two Hundred and Ninth Pennsylvania, which had arrived there after considerable fighting and loss of life, and the line was now prolonged to the Second Michigan near Battery 9, which was in our possession, and a cordon was thus formed around the break. This prevented any further advance of the enemy in that direction, and they had no room in which to reform their ranks. General Hartranft, therefore, turned his attention to other parts of the field. The Two Hundred and Eighth Pennsylvania Volunteers was stationed so that its left was within one hundred yards of Fort Haskell. Advancing therefrom it drove the enemy out of the ravine in front and captured one hundred prisoners, and by the aid of reinforcements was enabled to maintain the new line. Fort Haskell was crowded with our men, and those who could not get into position to fire, loaded the muskets for those who stood along the parapet, and under the fire thus kept up

from the line and from the fort, the enemy fell back toward Fort Stedman. By this time, seven A.M., the Second Brigade had come from its camp, a distance of some four miles, and passing through a ravine north of headquarters, had reached a spot directly in the rear of Fort Stedman, unobserved by the enemy. Here they took shelter under an abrupt bank, and waited for orders to charge. In the language of General Hartranft our lines now formed "two solid wing dams to check the enemy from sweeping the lines in the rear, to the north or south. There was still a distance of three hundred yards between the left of the Two Hundredth Pennsylvania and the right of the Two Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania, through which ran the road to Meade Station, uncovered; but any further advance of the enemy in that direction was impossible;" and he adds: "The time and opportunity to make these dispositions were due entirely to the stubborn courage of the Two Hundredth Regiment. . . . Although they did not know it at the time, and were apparently awaiting the attack of a superior force, they had captured Fort Stedman in that twenty minutes' fight." In a few minutes orders came from General Parke to retake the lines held by the foe. The signal for the charge was to be the advance of the Two Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania from the hill in the rear, toward Fort Stedman and in the full view of the enemy. Just as the arrangements were complete, a second order arrived, calling a halt until the Fifth Army Corps should reach the ground. But General Hartranft feeling sure of success, and

by no means certain that the rescinding order could be sent along his entire line in season, made the charge without a moment's delay. It was one of those crises which come rarely to any man, in which the actor stakes upon his own judgment the chances of a splendid success or of an irretrievable ruin. The spirit of their leader animated the men, and their onset that day is one of the most striking episodes of the war. The Two Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania led the charge. When its six hundred muskets, in waving lines of light, flashed into view, a cheer rang out from the men who were crowded in the ravine and another cheer answered from right and left; and in less than the time in which the event could be recorded, Fort Stedman and the batteries and the intervening line, were in Northern hands. Our casualties were 75 killed, 419 wounded and 523 missing; and the loss of the enemy, including prisoners, was at least 3000. Said a rebel officer to Captain Sholler, who bore a flag of truce to bury our dead: "When you were about to make your final charge, our generals were holding a council of war; but it was the shortest council of war you ever saw; for when they beheld such magnificent lines advancing they adjourned by each taking to his heels without ceremony." Fifteen days after this, on Sunday, April 9th, 1865, the Army of Northern Virginia surrendered, and the war ended.

With the rank of Major General, which was conferred upon him three days after the battle, General Hartranft in the last two weeks of the rebellion was not idle. His division was in the final attack on

Petersburg, and carried the works with a loss of one thousand men in killed and wounded. Its skirmishers were the first troops which entered the city, and the Division itself pursued Lee as far as Nottaway Court House. It was the twenty-fourth pitched battle in which General Hartranft was an active participant; and he provoked then, as he had done before, the single criticism that he voluntarily subjected himself to perils which in prudence he ought to have shunned.

Concerning Fort Stedman this comment remains to be added. The number of battles during the civil war was 2261.* The rank which the action at Fort Stedman holds in this list, as gauged by its casualties on our side, is 77. If calculated upon the basis of the casualties suffered by the rebels, its place would be 44.† In the "History of the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers," the author says: "He (General Hartranft) gained the first real success in the trenches at Petersburg, and won for himself the double star of a Major General."‡ It is an interesting fact, and a worthy one with which to close this recital, that the charge which won the day at Stedman, was witnessed by President Lincoln. Major Hodgkins describes the scene as follows: "He had passed the previous night at City Point with Generals

* Phisterer's Statistical Record, Vol. XIII, Scribner's "Campaigns of the Civil War," p. 218.

† "Battle of Fort Stedman," by Major Hodgkins, p. 46, note.

‡ History of Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers. Boston, p. 94.

Grant and Meade, and a review had been arranged in honor of his visit to the army. The attack of the enemy at Stedman, and the subsequent advance of the Union lines on the left, rendered a change of programme necessary. While intently watching the surging charge of Hartranft's line, he is reported to have said, 'This is better than a review.' Later in the day, however, he was honored with a review. The Fifth Corps had been removed from its camp and sent over to the right, to be available for the support of the Ninth. Its services not being required, it was returning, and was halted for review by the President. That being over, it was hurried to the left, where General Wright was just then receiving a counter-attack from the enemy. 'Thus at nearly the same time, our lines presented the curious picture of a battle won and a truce prevailing on the right, a review in rear of the centre, and a severe engagement at the left.' " *

The narrative of these deeds serves to illustrate one side of the character of General Hartranft, and it is the side upon which the public gaze has been chiefly fixed, and the side by which he has been judged. It is almost superfluous to say that it is worthy of men's admiration and has stood the challenge of military criticism. One fact is sufficient to demonstrate this. Without previous soldierly training, and without political influence, his native resources won for him, in less than four years, the high distinction of a Major General in an army of

* "Battle of Fort Stedman," p. 47.

veterans. A competent military authority declared that he was equal to the command of an army corps. This was in effect saying that he could have borne the responsibilities which were assigned by Napoleon to marshals like Ney and Murat. He possessed in full measure the two qualities which, if genius can be analyzed, make up military genius,—prudence and celerity. By universal consent, the greatest of modern commanders, Napoleon, is the standing embodiment of the latter attribute. It was the almost miraculous swiftness of his movements, quite as much as his tactical dispositions, which bewildered and confounded his foes; and men forgot in this outward exhibition of power, the laborious processes which preceded it and through whose medium it was wrought. Yet General Napier, the soldier-historian, declared of Napoleon, that “not all his experience, his power, his fortune, nor the contempt which he felt for the prowess of his adversaries, could induce him to relax in his precautions; every chance was considered and every measure calculated with as much care and circumspection, as if the most redoubtable enemy was opposed to him. The conqueror of Europe was as fearful of making false movements before an army of peasants, as if Frederick the Great had been in his front.” So with General Hartranft, the possession of qualities which are so seldom united in one man that they have come to be regarded as antagonistic, made him self-poised, and inspired him with a confidence which was in itself a harbinger of success. This intense self-faith was the more remarkable, because it was

never dissociated from a modesty which instinctively shrank from all public demonstrations. Yet it impelled him to acts which in a meaner spirit would have seemed like arrogance. Twice, on noted occasions and in great emergencies, he practically disregarded orders. But he was conscious of the trust which had been committed to him, and of his ability to meet its requirements; and in the light of that consciousness, a high sense of duty told him to lean upon his own resources, and to show the noblest obedience to the unwritten command by disobeying the letter of the written order. He acted wisely; and hundreds of brave lives saved, and a victory snatched from defeat, were the results of his wisdom. He was an absolute stranger to fear, and it was said of him, in the presence of his disbanded veterans, when the war had closed, that "his men knew that he never ordered them to go where he did not lead." I am discouraged in this poor attempt to do some justice to his memory, when I reflect that the genius of a soldier can only be properly characterized and measured by a soldier. I can simply indicate its rank, by outlining the qualities of its possessor, and guess at the infinite possibilities of achievement to which it was adequate by rehearsing the deeds which it accomplished in a comparatively narrow field of endeavor. For we all know what chequered influences may make or may mar the prospects of the aspirant for military fame. We know, at least, with how potent a sway political power has opened up a pathway for the soldiers of fortune. What, without that interest, would have been the fate of Marlbo-

rough or even of Wellington? No breeze of political favor wafted this hero into fame. He won his way at every step by his sword. There is one test, however, by which even a civilian may judge him: he was never wanting in the requirements of any post which was assigned to him. By what higher or better test can we gauge any human capacity? When Napoleon planted his guns on the porches of the Church of St. Roch, and put down the insurrection at Paris, he displayed the same qualities which afterwards won for him the battle of Marengo. To the seer of military science, he was just as great a warrior when he was an unknown lieutenant as when he was the conqueror of Europe. I do not know what of military greatness the same practiced eye would have discerned in General Hartranft, but this I know, that a larger share of those exigencies than usually falls to the lot of one man, which try the temper, test the endurance and demand the highest skill, while they bring no corresponding renown, were, by a coincidence which would be strange, if it had not resulted from his acknowledged fitness for a crisis, encountered by General Hartranft. When fortune failed us, he covered the retreat; when an overwhelming foe was to be checked, he led the forlorn hope. Lord Bacon once wrote: "Honorable retreats are no wise inferior to brave charges, as having less of fortune, more of discipline, and as much of valor;" and Sir John Moore has been renowned in song and story for his retreat upon Corunna. General Hartranft deserves to be tried by the same standard and to be accorded the same honor. The

man who crossed the bridge at Antietam in 1863 would have carried the bridge of Coa in 1810; the man who stood on the crater of the mine at Petersburg, or who mustered his men at early dawn at Fort Stedman, or who saved the Union forces at Weldon, would have led, we may be sure, a conquering division at Austerlitz or Wagram.

Perhaps I am belittling the record of General Hartranft's achievements by suggesting that they were wrought on a field comparatively narrow. The suggestion is true, only because the war of which those deeds were part was on a scale of huge dimensions. Yet, when we separate the actions in which he took part from the mass, we shall find that some of them had all the elements of historic interest. Take the battle of Fort Stedman as an instance. It was a night attack by the enemy in full force, upon a point which menaced the safety of our entire line; it involved the capture of a fort which we had deemed secure; it was the last and most desperate attempt of the Confederate Army under its most skillful leaders. It was followed in nine days by the capture of Richmond, and six days thereafter by the surrender of Lee at Appomattox. In replying to the insinuation that this action was simply an episode, a gallant officer from Massachusetts has said: "Whatever may be the verdict of history upon this point, the fact remains that, considering the numbers of the troops that took part in it, it was one of the most important engagements of the late war, and fully attained to the dignity of a battle. Had it occurred during any other campaign or at

any other period, or as an isolated event in the long siege of Petersburg, it would have acquired prominence in the annals of the war. It was the last desperate thrust of the Army of Northern Virginia before the agonies of its dissolution; and as a fair offset to the disaster which befell the Ninth Army Corps at the battle of the Mine in the same locality eight months previous, it is worthy of extended description, and a more prominent position in history than it has yet attained." And he adds this noble tribute to the services rendered that day by General Hartranft. "In this action," he writes, "he exhibited upon the dark background of disaster, the brilliant qualities he had previously displayed on many a bloody field. He was equal to the great emergency, and manifested not only the military skill requisite to the command of a large division, but the nerve to fight a single regiment and lead it into the hottest fire. But for his opportune arrival in front of the Dunn House Battery with the Two Hundredth Regiment, just in season to check the advance of the enemy's line, it is impossible to state what might have been the result. His fierce attack upon the head of the enemy's column prevented its deployment, and gave time for the regiments on the right and left to take strong positions. Had the enemy succeeded in gaining the high ground in rear of our main lines, the sequel of that morning's assault would have been far different. That this opinion was shared by his commanders may be judged from their subsequent action. Immediately after the battle, General Parke recommended that

General Hartranft be brevetted Major General for ability and gallantry displayed that day. General Meade replied that he had already forwarded a similar recommendation, and that his request for this special honor had been anticipated by General Grant and the Secretary of War. He received at once the reward so nobly won, and the act of justice was applauded by the entire army." His highest praise as a soldier remains to be spoken. "War," it has been said, "is the condition of this world. From man to the smallest insect, all are at strife; and the glory of arms which cannot be obtained without the exercise of honor, fortitude, courage, obedience, modesty and temperance, excites the brave man's patriotism and is a chastening corrective for the rich man's pride." We may not endorse the proposition that war is a thing of necessity, but we cannot withhold our admiration of the qualities which are essential to its conduct. In a larger measure than most men General Hartranft possessed every one of those attributes, and the gift was unalloyed by the vulgar impulse of personal ambition. If he aspired to military renown, it was only because that renown would signalize his efforts in behalf of a government whose overthrow was sought through an unrighteous treason; and when the traitors were foiled, he refused the offer of promotion which the government held out to him, and retired to civil life.

His record as a soldier also bears witness to a service which he rendered primarily to his own State, but whose beneficent results are destined to be

felt over the Union. He revived, if indeed he may not be said to have originated, the National Guard of Pennsylvania. Taught in the terrible school of the rebellion, he saw the necessity for such an organization; and he brought to the enterprise all the resources of his judgment and all the influence which he could wield as an officer of the army and as the Chief Executive of the Commonwealth. To give to the State a military force which should have the discipline and solidity of a standing army, without any of the evils which usually attend such a body of troops, was the darling project of his later years; and it was a project worthy of his endeavors. Very few citizens of our State have any just conception of the debt of gratitude which they owe to General Hartranft in this regard. I cannot put that obligation in stronger or more stirring language than was done by the eloquent divine who officiated at his grave. In the course of his eulogy upon the illustrious deceased, he said: "Nothing in his career was more fruitful of good to the Commonwealth than his services to its National Guard. When his immediate predecessor appointed him Major General of our military police, that body was a chain of disconnected links. Each link contained good material, but as a whole it was a rope of sand. To this disorganized, or rather unorganized, system General Hartranft directed his soldierly ability, and to-day, under his leadership, the National Guard of Pennsylvania is entitled to rank in every essential respect with the army of the nation. Not only did he thus influence our own State organization, but through

the example of Pennsylvania other States were led to reorganize their militia and place their citizen soldiers upon a worthy footing. Thus, from the quiet, earnest, persistent intelligence of General Hartranft there issued an influence which has helped to make our country strong for defence against the hour of possible trial."* Rightly to estimate the extent of that service and of its corresponding merit, it is necessary to remember that at the time of the riots of 1877, in which many lives and millions in value of property were destroyed, the State militia did not number more than 5000 men, if, in fact, it approached that figure. It was officered perhaps better than Falstaff's brigade, because that consisted chiefly of ensigns, corporals and lieutenants, while the Pennsylvania militia boasted at least twenty brigadier generals and several major generals, each with the usual staff accompaniments. The entire command of some of these generals, I am told, amounted to 200 men. With this generous supply of ornaments at its head, it is no matter for surprise that the rank and file of such an organization should regard the main purpose of its being as one of display; and so long as this tradition existed, all thought of soldierly discipline was impossible. To bring order out of this chaos, and to mould into a compact and yet mobile body these incongruous materials, was a task which required both patience and genius. Superfluous officers were to be weeded out; a rigid system

* Rev. Henry C. McCook, D.D., in his funeral sermon in the Court House at Norristown.

of discipline was to be introduced ; and above all a new and hardier element was to be pressed into the service. General Hartranft brought to the self-imposed duty an enthusiasm of which only those who knew him well could have believed him capable. Fortunately for him and for the commonwealth, hundreds of veterans, inured to all the hardships and practiced in all the requirements of actual warfare, answered his summons and enrolled themselves under his leadership. The recreated body was no holiday soldiery. It was subjected to a discipline almost as severe as that of the field ; it had its camp life ; the old trappings were cast aside and the service uniform of the regular army was adopted ; and the men were perfected in those details which were required to be known to enable them to be transported at a moment's notice. And what is the result ? In the State of Pennsylvania a body of troops, 8000 strong, fully equipped and ready for instant service, can be concentrated at any point within a period of twenty-one hours. All that the most adverse criticism has been able to say of this organization is that a few single regiments in New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts may be superior in material and parade drill to any single regiment in Pennsylvania ; but I have it on good military authority that in the essential matters of compactness and mobility and discipline as one body, the National Guard of our State is not excelled, even if it is equalled, by the regular army. In writing upon this subject, an officer who was upon the staff of General Hartranft,*

* Lt. Col. John Houston Merrill.

remarks that "in the various reports and criticisms by regular officers sent by the United States Government each year to inspect our Guard, the fact has several times been referred to, that, had there existed throughout the North, at the breaking out of the rebellion, a few such volunteer organizations as Pennsylvania possesses, we would have been saved many thousands of lives and millions of property, and much of the other disastrous effects of the late war." To the argument that the occasion for its services is too remote to justify the expenditure of time and money which it demands, the reply may be made that the quarter of a century which has elapsed since the close of the rebellion, is the longest period in our history as a nation during which peace has prevailed.

In what has been said, we have looked only upon that side of this man's character in respect of which it may be said the possessor belonged to the whole country. Even in that aspect and in the scanty outline which I have been able to present, that character and the life-history of which it was part, are so rounded and complete that nothing would seem to be needed to fill the measure of any ordinary ambition. If this were all, and if he had done no more, General Hartmanft would be entitled to the fame which he won as a military hero. It was not simply what he did, as the absolute certainty that he could do far more, if the occasion should arise, which gave him this proud preëminence. Few men, however gifted, would care to be subjected to a severer test, and of few men would it be just to demand that, outside of their chosen calling, they should exhibit marks of great-

ness in another and wholly different field. The Duke of Wellington provoked that test, and was adjudged to have failed as a statesman. It was not so with General Hartranft. Unless I greatly err, the service which he rendered to his State as her chief civil officer was quite as valuable and enduring as the service which he gave to the nation in the field. Here was a new sphere, which called into play a wholly different set of faculties from those which had formerly been exercised. Yet here, as in the plane which he had quitted, there was that in the mental and moral nature of the man which inspired universal confidence, because it enabled him to deal intelligently with every question of state, and because it evinced the presence of a reserve power which no contingency could exhaust. When the riots which disgraced the commonwealth broke out he was unfortunately absent; but at the moment of his return the insurgents quailed, and quiet was restored. Men of all parties confessed that in him, as its Chief Executive, the State had a ruler whose courage equaled his discretion, and whose judgment and conscience controlled every official act. In the conduct of his high office his methods were faultless. He came to the discharge of its functions with an accurate knowledge of the finances of the State and of its needs, which he had gained during his incumbency of a minor position; and the public records show that he turned that knowledge to good account, in advising the course of legislation. Nothing escaped his notice, and no suitor was too humble for his attention. At one of the very few times I saw him in Harrisburg,

he showed me the copy of a bill which had passed the Legislature and awaited his action. It was a law making some changes, of a purely technical character, in proceedings before road juries, and it could hardly be said to have been a matter of great public concern. Yet the memoranda and questions which he had placed upon the margin showed that he had studied its every provision with care.

There is only one standard by which to gauge the supreme claim to rulership, and it has been furnished by the born rulers of men. In a free people and under a government of the people, every man who proposes to become a bearer of authority, should be tried by that standard, and by no lower one. Its high requirements cannot be squeezed within the petty limits of any Civil Service rules, however elaborate; they are not founded upon the learning of the schools; they will not bend to any doctrine of political convenience. That standard asks in the candidate for its honors, not book knowledge, but the rarest of all wisdom, the knowledge of himself and of men; it asks for a conscience and for enthusiasm; it would know whether he can legislate for a century hence, while he does not overlook the needs of to-day. Once in a century, perhaps, some God-made man steps out from the ranks, challenges that standard, and is handed the sceptre. I can name two such men—Oliver Cromwell, of England, and Abraham Lincoln, of America—but I must pause long before I can name a third. Measured by the criterion which these lives afford, how swiftly and ignominiously must many modern leaders of the multitude

pass into oblivion; machine-made legislators who construct laws by the rule and square of expediency, and machine-made judges who expound those laws by ill-fitting precedents; men, all of them, who can sit silent and moveless while moral and social revolutions are at work around them, but whose being is stirred to its innermost depths if a word is dropped out of the preamble to a statute, or if a seal is omitted from a deed. General Hartranft belonged to no such species of human *garrulinæ*, or, rather, to no such order of moral paralytics. He did not, like Cromwell, direct a revolution under which a kingly dynasty went down; he did not, like Lincoln, free 4,000,000 slaves in a day; but he would have done either act if the time and the place had required it. Before he was seated in the Executive chair, his adversaries predicted that he would select an unworthy Cabinet; when the appointments were made, even his foes confessed that they were wise ones. His first veto struck nearly 100 bills from the calendar, and he anticipated by that veto the cardinal principle of the New Constitution which followed, prohibiting all manner of special legislation. By iniquitous Acts of Revival, which were renewed year by year, charters which would otherwise have expired for non-payment of the enrollment tax, were continued in being for the sole purposes of speculation, and it is stated that in sixteen years the charters so vivified amounted to 1622. The Governor vetoed 82 of these bills in one day, and put a stop to the barter. He was compelled to a sterner exercise of his prerogative. The town of Somerset was

nearly destroyed in 1872 by fire, and the Legislature promptly passed a bill appropriating \$75,000 of the public moneys for the relief of the impoverished citizens. In a message which showed how warmly he sympathized in their misfortune, he vetoed that measure on the ground that the policy of the State had never permitted individual losses to be compensated by drafts on the State treasury. Soon afterwards a great railroad corporation, which more fully perhaps than any other single agency had developed the resources and added to the wealth of the Commonwealth, applied for leave to increase its capital stock at its own discretion. The Legislature enacted that such authority should be given, but the Governor returned the bill without his signature. In the riots of 1874 at Susquehanna Depot, in which the works of the Erie Railroad Company suffered at the hands of its employés, the Governor was appealed to by the Sheriff for 1500 soldiers. Many citizens, including the Chief Burgess, however, protested against military intervention, but the Governor sent the troops without delay. His reply to the protestants contained this sentence: "Whenever the laws of the Commonwealth shall provide that the employés of a railroad company may suspend all traffic upon it until their wages are paid, I will acquiesce; but I cannot do so while the law refuses to contemplate any such remedy. My duty is not to make the laws or to criticise them, but to execute them; and that duty I must discharge." So, in the later riots at Pittsburgh and elsewhere, which he quelled by calling out the whole military force of the State, and in

which he even asked aid of the Federal government, the language of his message embodied a meaning which may be profitably pondered by workmen and capitalists alike: "The attitude of the people," he wrote, "towards these two forces during the great strike has also a deep significance. In the general sympathy for the strikers, dulled only by their unlawful acts, the workmen have assurance that in all right and lawful efforts to better their condition, they will have the aid of nearly all classes of their fellow citizens. And in the prejudices against corporations, those who control them may realize that the possession of great wealth and the control of great enterprises impose obligations to the public which they cannot afford to ignore."

I do not propose to weary you by going into an elaborate summary of his administration of the civil power of the Commonwealth. But justice to his record as a statesman requires some proof that it was not on the negative side of his administration that General Hartranft alone displayed the qualities which fitted him for rulership. He had in a large degree the creative faculty which enabled him to map out new methods of advanced legislation, as well as the conservative force which held him to methods which experience had shown to be safe ones. He appreciated the needs and the aspirations of a progressive community. In the light of after-events, his annual messages to the Legislature teem with suggestions of work to be done in fields which were then untrodden, which now seem to be almost prophetic.

He pointed out, as they never had been by his predecessors, the defects in the public school system. He did not spare the subject of the incompetency, as a class, of the teachers; nor the delinquency of the taxpayers, who were mainly responsible for that incompetency, by refusing proper compensation for the members of that profession. He advocated schools of industrial art and of seamanship as indispensable adjuncts to existing methods of instruction; and he cited statistics to indicate the thousands of children who, from the poverty or neglect of their natural protectors, were barred out from all advantages or opportunities of education. Under these heads, the arguments which he drew, in most perspicuous language, from the vast resources of the Commonwealth, calling, as their development does, for the highest skill, and from the prisons whose tables show how crime is fostered by ignorance and idleness, make up in themselves a philosophical treatise which would stand the test of the best criticism of our day. It is an evidence of their truth that in more than one direction they have begun to be successfully acted on. One branch of the school system, an outgrowth of the war, was the Soldiers' Orphans Schools, the privileges of which ceased when the pupil reached the age of 16 years. Governor Hartranft recommended the extension of the term, the addition of such studies, and the learning of such trades, as would tend to render the beneficiaries self-supporting.

Regarding insurance, an enterprise in which enormous sums were yearly being paid, in the shape of premiums, by the citizens, it is surprising that prior

to General Hartranft's administration no adequate safeguard had been provided by State legislation. At his instance an Insurance Department was created, with salutary supervisory powers, and stringent regulations were enacted, under which the frauds which had theretofore been perpetrated under the guise of capital almost wholly fictitious, were scarcely possible. The Insane Asylums at Norristown and Warren resulted from his recommendation; he recommended provisions which were afterwards embodied in the Constitution of 1873, imposing limitations upon the powers of State Banks and Savings and Trust Companies. In his Message of 1874 he was compelled to advert to the question of employing military force in suppressing civil disorders. Very emphatically he repudiated the notion that the National Guard should constitute a State police force; and he affirmed, on the contrary, that where, through the neglect or timidity of civil authorities, the services of troops were necessary, the expenses of their employment should be borne by the county in which the delinquency occurred. During his incumbency of the Executive office of the State, the New Constitution came into being, and inaugurated a new era in the history of the Commonwealth. And in his second gubernatorial term the Centennial achieved its grand success. He was renominated by acclamation, on May 26th, 1875, at Lancaster; the only instance on record of a renomination of that character.

This unanimity of sentiment was not due to the compliant character of the man, nor to the concur-

rence of favoring circumstances. The man himself was too self-poised to be compliant, in the sense of being weak; and the course of public events was antagonistic to harmony of action. Men were divided as to the expediency of the changes which were inevitable if the New Constitution should be adopted; and various interests, corporate and individual, had suffered severely in their aspirations by executive vetoes. The reasons for his supremacy lay on the surface. His administration of affairs had exhibited the exercise of an unrivalled common sense, and judgment both of men and measures. This common sense displayed itself to every observer, even in the method which he pursued in the details of the public business. The applicant for his attention was received without the slightest ostentation; was heard with the most respectful attention, and was answered with prompt decision, if the matter permitted it, and if delay was required, its limits were specified. His manner was perfect: there was a sedate dignity, which was yet so absolutely unassuming, that the humblest visitor was put immediately at ease in his presence. But beneath this quiet exterior there was a religious sense of duty, which could rise into stern indignation in the presence of aught that savored of dishonesty or treachery. This is not the time, nor is this the occasion, to open what ought to be a sealed book. It is enough to say that he was confronted with temptations subtly contrived and wrapped up in a triple covering of respectability and expedience; temptations which held out the lure of preferment as well as of fortune, and which involved

to the mind of the ordinary casuist no violation of official trust; but his instinct of honor and justice kept him safe from contagion.*

And now I ask what is wanting in the portrait upon which we have been looking, to bring it up to the ideal standard of heroism. By a strange law of our being, one of the noblest attributes of the soul which shone beneath it, dimmed perhaps its lustre in the eyes of the multitude, for General Hartranft was doubly great because he shunned greatness. Other men, with his force, but of coarser fibre, would have climbed the heights of ambition, to their frozen summits; he was content to live in the sunshine of the lower lands. Perhaps it was well for him that he was content. He had done a double work and had won a dual fame, and he deserved to rest. No glittering insignia could add to his greatness, and no popular plaudits could deepen the love which men bore him. How unchanged he seemed through all the years. Youth still looked out of his eyes, the old smile was on the lips, the voice was as low and

* General Hartranft appreciated humor. He related with great glee, an episode which occurred during his colonelcy of the Fifty-first Pennsylvania. General Ferrero, the brigade commander, had no perception of locality, and when he undertook to guide them, his men invariably lost their way. General Hartranft at one time was ordered to follow him, and knowing his chief's infirmity, he sent an aid to discover his whereabouts. The officer returned exhausted after a search of some hours, and reported that General Ferrero was five miles on a road to the left, when he should have been that far on a road to the right. "And," said General Hartranft, "he told me that the worst march since the days of King Pharaoh was the march that day of General Ferrero."

earnest as ever, and the ample locks were unthinned. You forgot what the man had done in what he was. Some one who saw him on that April morning in 1861, has told me that just before he started from the old homestead, and when the men who made up his first command were forming in ranks on the street, he appeared in citizen's dress. He was laughingly implored by his younger friends to don his uniform, and finally yielding to their entreaties, he went back, and opened the trunk where he had carefully packed it, and came out again resplendent but diffident. I wonder whether on that day his vision went beyond the limits of the little town and into the new world which was about to open before him. Across its vista and above the glare of battle, was there no picture of a saved country and a grateful people, and of a name high in the starry dome? Talk to me of the wonder-land of fiction! What novelist in his dreams would have foreshadowed, what philosopher in his retreat would have foreseen, the mighty panorama which lay within the narrow compass of the four years that were to come. Whole centuries of the past counted as nothing against that interval. Yet short as it was, it was long enough for Truth to rise from the earth where she had lain, and for Justice to erase from the charter of our rights its one foul blot. No truer words were ever written or uttered than these of Carlyle: "The ages differ greatly, even infinitely, from one another. Considerable tracts of ages there have been, by far the majority indeed, wherein the men, unfortunate mortals, were a set of mimetic creatures rather than

men; without heart-insight as to this universe, and its heights and its abysses; without conviction or belief of their own. . . . The memory of such ages fades away forever out of the minds of all men. What melodious, loving heart will search into their records, will sing of them, or celebrate them?" One such age ended on the day which ushered in the year 1863 and the Proclamation of Freedom. Let us hope that it has been followed by a better and nobler one. It was his glory whose life we now commemorate, that he helped to make the history of that middle time. He little knew—how could he?—when his feet first turned southward, that his sword was to be one of those which were to cut the knot that philosopher and statesman and philanthropist had tried in vain to loosen, and that he was to be one of the leaders in a conflict on which a world was to look, and over which future generations would rejoice. And here I leave him with you. His life, his death, have sealed with a new and holier impress our common allegiance to a common country. Above all, our dead hero has added a new lustre to the State of Pennsylvania. Beside his tomb, let us renew our vows to the grand old Commonwealth whose children we are, and that owned him as her son; the parent that stirred his young manhood with the story of Braddock's Field and Valley Forge; that when danger threatened, gave him to the armies of the Union, and when he came back crowned with the garlands of victory, looked proudly on him; and then, when his work was done, took him tenderly to her bosom.

PENNSYLVANIA CLUB LECTURES.

COURSE OF 1889-90.

AN ADDRESS

ON

THE LIFE AND SERVICES OF JOHN F. HARTRANFT.

BY

HON. WILLIAM N. ASHMAN.

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION.

PHILADELPHIA:
THE PENNSYLVANIA CLUB,
1423 WALNUT STREET.
1890.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 700 295 4

